Ontario

Part I: Results-based Plan 2013-14

Ministry of Agriculture and Food
and
Ministry of Rural Affairs

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PART I: PUBLISHED RESULTS-BASED PLAN BRIEFING BOOK 2013-14

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1.1 MINISTRY OVERVIEW

1.1.1 Ministries' Mandates

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs work to advance the government's efforts to promote a more competitive and productive agri-food and agri-product sector, and economic growth and opportunities for rural Ontario. In doing so, both ministries are supporting rural and urban communities and a high quality of life for all Ontario residents.

By working towards these goals, the ministries will help create a better business climate for the agri-food industry and stronger rural communities that support good jobs, attract investment, and make even greater contributions to Ontario's economic success.

1.1.2 Ministries' Contribution to Priorities and Results

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Ontario is blessed with thousands of hectares of farmland, a rich diversity in foods produced, and an agri-food industry which is one of the biggest drivers of our economic engine. The sector is strong and resilient, growing during and after the recent recession. In fact, the sector contributes more than $34 billion to the province's GDP, and supports more than 710,000 jobs – that's 11 per cent of jobs in Ontario.

There are about 52,000 farms in Ontario, and Ontario's 3,000 food processors buy 65 per cent of their inputs here at home. With $10.8 billion in exports for 2012, Ontario is among the leading export provinces and enjoys a well-earned international reputation for high-quality, safe food.

Ontario's agri-food industry is big – but it could be bigger. The sector is poised for even greater success, and with the Premier as Minister of Agriculture and Food, there is a unique opportunity to shine a light on the strength and potential of this sector.

Opportunities abound. Together with clients and stakeholder groups, we will work to bridge the gap between rural and urban in Ontario and support economic growth for our agri-food industry.

We will do this by focusing on three key goals:

- Make Ontario a better place to do business
- Increase competitiveness through innovation
- Grow our markets at home and abroad

By making real strides in these three important areas, we can create a better business climate for our industry along the entire value chain – at the farm, in food manufacturing, and in the bio-economy – which will support more made-in-Ontario jobs and make even greater contributions to our economic success.

Ministry of Rural Affairs

Promoting Ontario's long-term economic growth is essential to succeeding in today's global economy. To maximize our potential for economic growth across the province, rural Ontario must be at the table to ensure its voice is heard and its unique needs addressed.

Rural Ontario's importance speaks for itself. Collectively, its communities contribute more than $108 billion in economic output – or close to 19 per cent of provincial GDP. And with 2.5 million residents, it doubles Manitoba's population.

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It's also home to innovative industrial hubs. From advanced auto production, mining and forestry to an award-winning wine industry and growing retail sector, rural communities embody economic diversification.

But to continue building its economy, rural Ontario's unique and varied interests must be placed front and centre.

To date, much has been done. Through investments in local roads, bridges, water systems and other large-scale projects, rural Ontario's infrastructure needs continue to be addressed. And as part of the 2013 Ontario budget, small and rural municipalities will benefit from a new, dedicated $100 million fund for this kind of critical infrastructure.

The new Ontario government is applying a rural lens to its decision-making process, and rural partners will be consulted to identify key priorities and solutions, so that residents of Ontario's rural communities receive the services, programs and opportunities they need to prosper.

The result will be a more robust rural Ontario: A highly innovative, economically diverse region that is better-positioned to create well-paying jobs and attract investment. And in the process, build a prosperous, forward-looking Ontario that is truly competitive.

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Ministry Contribution to Priority Areas and Results

Government Priority Areas
Government Results
Ministry Strategic Priorities
OMAF Focus Areas
MRA Focus Areas
Ministry Strategies (=votes)
Ministry Activities (=items)
Jobs and Growth
Fiscal Responsibility
Fair Society
Competitive Business Climate
Modern Infrastructure
Highly Skilled Workforce
Promoting Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Going Global
Vibrant and Strong Communities
1. Make Ontario a better place to do business
2. increasing competitiveness through innovation
3. Growing our markets here and abroad
4. Supporting a strong rural Ontario that strengthens the province
5. Enable a modern, high performing organization
Make Ontario a better place to do business / Increase investment through innovation / Grow our markets at home and abroad
Develop a "rural lens" to government decision making / Engage rural stakeholders / Develop effective programs and services for rural Ontario
Policy Development
Ministry Administration
Better Public Health and Environment
Strong Agricultural, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities
Economic Development
Research
Business Risk Management Transfers
Agricultural and Rural Capital

1.1.3 Ministry Programs and Activities for OMAF

In 2013-14, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will work to advance the government's efforts to promote more competitive and more productive agri-food and agri-product sectors by focusing on three key goals:

1. Make Ontario a better place to do business
2. Increase competitiveness through innovation
3. Grow our markets at home and abroad

During the current fiscal year, the ministry will support each goal through a number of key activities:

1. Make Ontario a better place to do business
    - Develop the next generation of Open for Business
    - Set measurable goals for the agri-food industry
    - Improve a risk-based approach to food safety
    - Revise Farm Business Registration
    - Work with the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) on water initiatives
    - Develop a provincial mandate for green diesel fuels

For the agri-food industry, **Open for Business** focuses on creating a regulatory, client-centric environment that supports economic success and makes it easier for people to do business in Ontario. In 2013-2014, the ministry will develop the next generation of Open for Business by enhancing its engagement with the industry to further identify regulatory issues and find creative solutions through government-industry collaboration.

The ministry will work with all players in the agri-food system to **set measurable goals** for the industry. OMAF will engage with industry to develop measurable goals and related targets/performance measures, as well as to identify opportunities for government-industry cooperation to creatively drive market-based solutions and industry independence.

The ministry will also further develop its **risk-based approach to food safety** to ensure consumers can count on safe, high-quality food from Ontario.

OMAF will develop new and/or revised options for the **Farm Business Registration** program to ensure that they meet the changing needs of producers and farm organizations.

The ministry will work with the **Ministry of the Environment on initiatives that support clean water,** including the multi-ministry provincial water strategy led by MOE and the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. The ministry will also reflect the agri-food industry's interests in discussions regarding greenhouse wastewater issues, source water protection, Lake Simcoe, and the Great Lakes Basin.

Other initiatives with MOE include implementing the Ontario Climate Change Action Plan to enable the agri-food industry to adapt to climate change through funding from Growing Forward 2. The ministry will also work with MOE on the development of a provincial mandate for **greener diesel fuels.**

2. Increase competitiveness through innovation
    - Facilitate the horse racing industry transition
    - Target client opportunities
    - Improve the land use planning system
    - Implement GF2 Strategic Initiatives

In 2013-2014, the ministry will work to further increase the competitiveness and productivity of Ontario's agri-food and agri-product sectors through innovation.

It will continue to work with the **horse racing industry**, the Transition Panel, and the Ontario Racing Commission to ensure that the industry is successful and sustainable for the long-term.

The ministry will pilot a one-window approach that **targets client opportunities** when implementing Growing Forward 2 Strategic Initiatives in order to seize high-benefit opportunities, specifically in the food processing and bio-product sectors.

The ministry will work with the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and other partner ministries, to develop policy options for **improving the land use planning system** to support the development of sustainable communities.

The ministry will also **implement Growing Forward 2 Strategic Initiatives** that will help agri-food and agri-product businesses and organizations grow their profits, expand their markets, and manage shared risks.

3. Grow our markets at home and abroad
    - Deliver the Local Food Fund
    - Implement the Local Food Strategy
    - Expand agri-food exports

In 2013-2014, OMAF will deliver on the budget commitment – if passed - of $30 million over three years for a **Local Food Fund** to support innovative local food projects and implement the legislative and non-legislative components of a **Local Food Strategy.**

The legislative component of the strategy is the Local Food Act, which if passed, would help make more local food available in markets, schools, cafeterias, grocery stores and restaurants throughout the province.

The ministry will also work with the industry to **increase food exports** and enhance Ontario's well-earned international reputation for high-quality, safe food.

1.1.4 Ministry Programs and Activities for MRA

In 2013-14, the Ministry of Rural Affairs will work to support economic growth and opportunities for rural Ontario by focusing on three key goals:

1. Develop a "rural lens" to government decision making
2. Engage rural stakeholders
3. Develop effective programs and services for rural Ontario

1. Develop a "rural lens" to government decision making

In collaboration with other ministries, MRA will **develop and implement a "rural lens"** to ensure that the needs of rural Ontario are considered when decisions are made.

2. Engage rural stakeholders

In 2013-2014, the ministry will **launch conversations with stakeholders** to identify priorities and propose solutions to address the specific needs of rural Ontario.

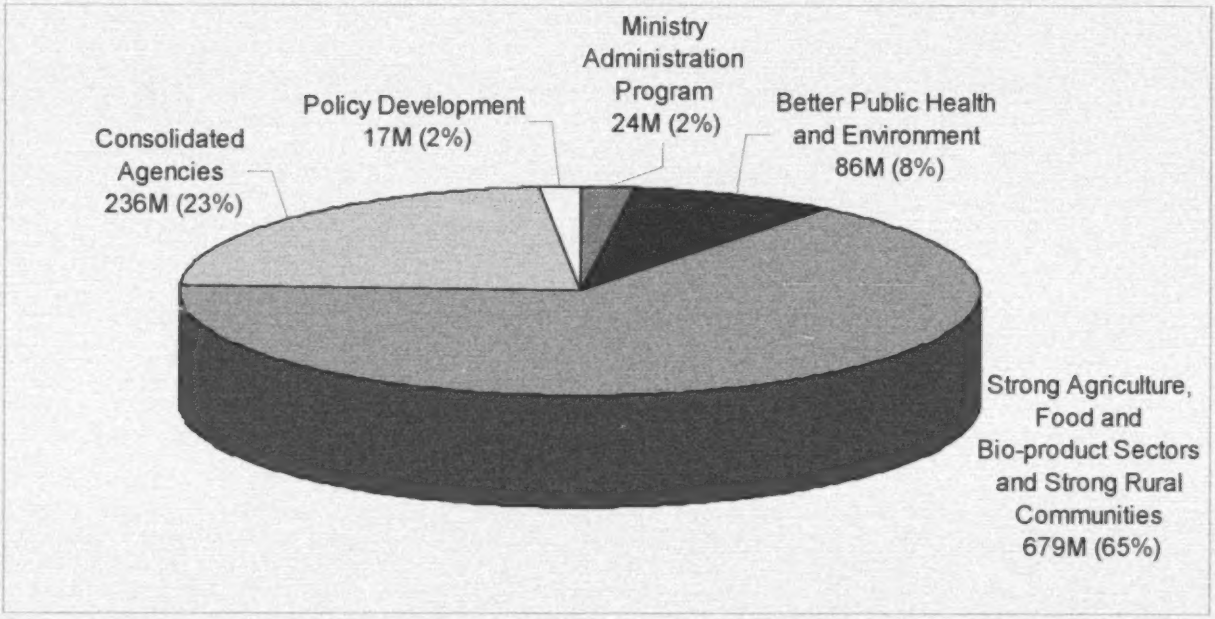
3. Develop effective programs and services for rural Ontario

The ministry is committed to building strong and vibrant rural communities and regions. MRA will continue to **develop and deliver timely economic development programs, tools and information to rural communities in Ontario.**

It will also explore with other ministries the opportunity to **streamline and improve the coordination of service delivery**, including a client-centric, one-window approach.

The ministry will also work with the Ministry of Infrastructure to **deliver the budget commitment – if passed - of $100 million to support infrastructure projects in small and rural municipalities.** This investment demonstrates an ongoing commitment to working with municipalities, especially rural partners, to help make critical infrastructure investments that will strengthen communities and create jobs.

Ministry Allocation of 2013-14 Base Spending ($M)


Ministry Administration Program 24M (2%)
Policy Development 17M (2%)
Better Public Health and Environment 86M (8%)
Consolidated Agencies 236M (23%)
Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities 679M (65%)

Ministry Planned Expenditures 2013-14 ($M)

Operating	901
Capital	140
TOTAL	1,041

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1.2 HIGHLIGHTS OF 2012-13 ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2012-2013, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs worked to achieve a vision of successful and sustainable agri-food and agri-product businesses.

The ministry successfully negotiated, with the federal government, the new agricultural policy framework – Growing Forward 2. Together, the governments of Canada and Ontario developed strategic initiatives that will help industry to grow profits, expand markets and manage risks.

Programming will be rolled out over 2013-14 in six areas of focus: Business and Leadership Development, Environment and Climate Change, Animal and Plant Health, Market Development, Labour Productivity Enhancement and Assurance Systems, with Innovation embedded throughout the six focus areas.

In conjunction with commodity groups, representing producers, the ministry also successfully re-designed the provincial Risk Management Program (RMP). The new Risk Management Program is fiscally responsible and predictable for both government and producers. Innovative features include an industry-managed premium fund that shares the risk and helps industry better meet its needs.

In 2012, the ministry worked with livestock producers to develop and fund the Ontario Corn Fed Beef risk management fund. This industry-led risk management tool supports market-driven solutions and promotes local food opportunities.

In addition, to help livestock farmers affected by dry weather conditions, the ministry supported the producer-led Hay East initiative. The government's assistance helped transport donated hay from western Canada to Ontario farmers in need.

To help tree fruit growers whose crops experienced damage due to an early frost, the ministry partnered with the federal government to deliver financial support. The funding was aimed at helping growers develop strategies to prevent or mitigate frost damage. This is in addition to support through Business Risk Management programs, including Production Insurance, AgriStability and Ontario's Self-Directed Risk Management program.

In November 2012, the ministry streamlined the accreditation process for general farm organizations by introducing a temporary amendment to a regulation under the Farm Registration and Farm Organizations Funding Act, 1993. The amendment simplifies the eligibility requirements that farm organizations have to meet in order to be accredited.

In early 2013, the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs began the transition to one organization that serves two ministers – the Minister of Agriculture and Food, and the Minister of Rural Affairs.

The transition helped to ensure that the agriculture sector and rural residents have a strong voice and that their concerns are heard and considered in government decision-making.

For more successes and highlights, please see the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' annual report.

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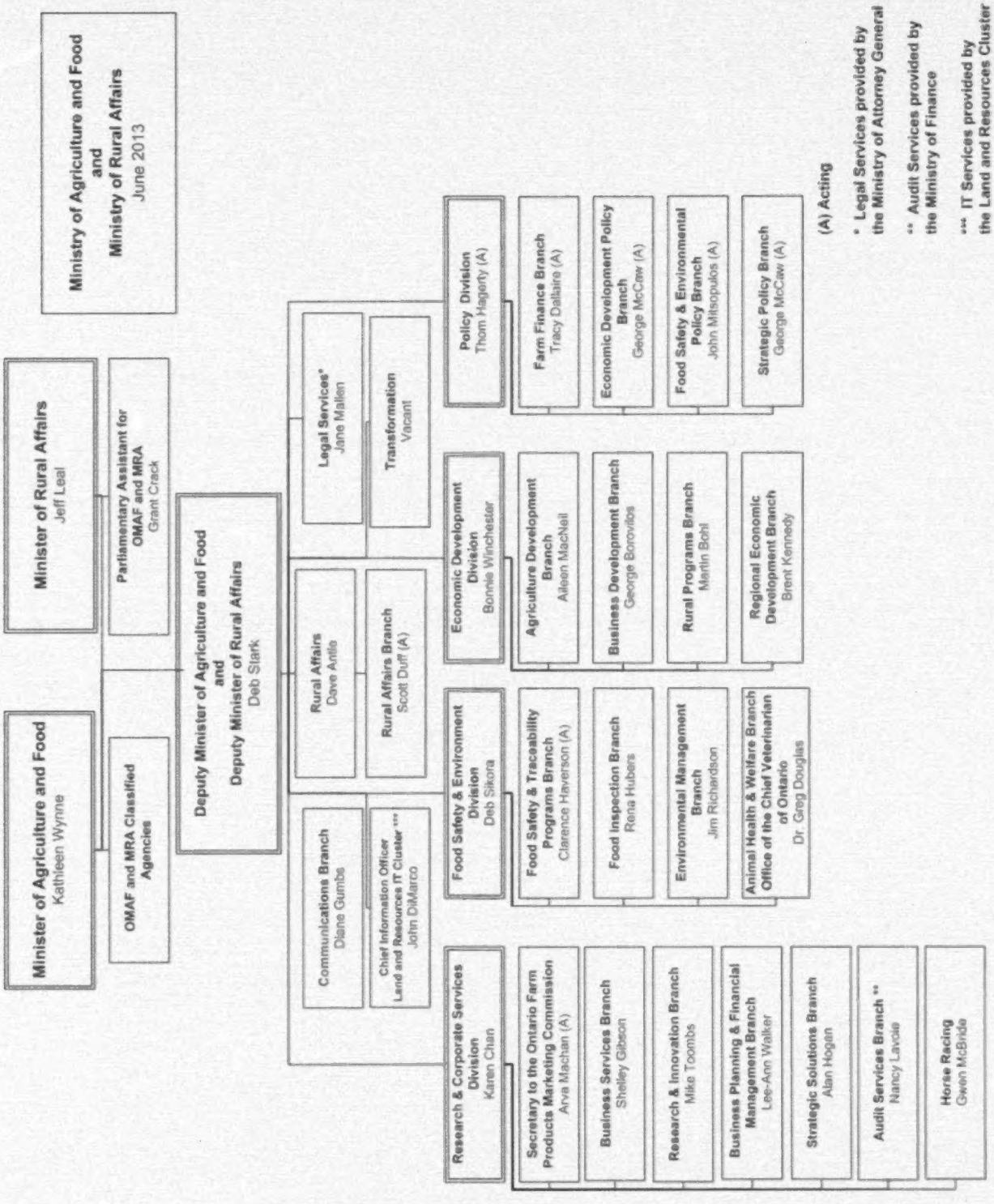
1.3 MINISTRY ORGANIZATION CHART



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1.4 AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (ABCS)

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs works to advance the government's efforts to promote a more competitive and more productive agri-food and agri-product sector. In doing so, both ministries are supporting economic growth in rural and urban communities and a high-quality of life for all Ontario residents.

The agencies, boards and commissions are aligned to work toward the ministries' priorities. They perform a range of functions, from administering production insurance programs to providing farmers with protection against natural hazards and delivering income stabilization payments; they supervise the Province's 20 marketing boards and four representative commodity associations, and fulfill other operational, trust and advisory functions.

The following is a complete list of the agencies, boards and commissions as classified under the Agency Establishment and Accountability Directive for which the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs are responsible. Only those entities with assets, liabilities, revenues or expenses greater than $50 million, or an annual surplus or deficit or outside revenue source of greater than $10 million, are consolidated in the ministries' results-based plan.

Agencies Consolidated in Ministries' Results-based Plan

Agricorp (Operational Enterprise)

Agricorp is an Ontario government agency created in 1997 with the mandate of delivering crop insurance and other agricultural business risk management (BRM) programs. Agricorp currently delivers three core programs, AgriStability, Production Insurance (PI) and the suite of Risk Management Programs (RMP), as well as several other smaller programs (e.g., Farm Business Registration). Agricorp is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO) (Operational Service)

The role of the ARIO is to (1) inquire into programs of research with respect to agriculture, food and veterinary medicine and consumer studies; (2) select and recommend areas of research for the betterment of agriculture, food, veterinary medicine and consumer studies; and (3) stimulate interest in research as a means of developing a high degree of efficiency in the production and marketing of agricultural and food products in Ontario. In general, ARIO provides strategic advice to the Ministry regarding the direction of Ministry funded research programs.

Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) (Regulatory Agency)

The commission, a self-financing agency, is responsible for governing and regulating thoroughbred and standardbred horse racing in Ontario. It licences all racetrack operators as well as those who work at the tracks or participate in racing. Under the Racing Commission Act, it has the power to suspend violators, or to impose and collect fines, should participants breach the rules of racing established in Ontario.

Financial Information for Consolidated Agencies ($M)

	2013-14 Expenditure Estimates	2013-14 Revenue Estimates	2012-13 Expenditure Interim Actuals	2012-13 Revenue Interim Actuals	2011-12 Expenditure Actuals	2011-12 Revenue Actuals
Agricorp	235.82	219.09	219.66	204.54	124.74	154.69
ARIO	(9.62)	2.01	(13.28)	1.84	(4.59)	1.92
ORC	9.80	11.18	9.80	11.24	10.61	12.41

Non-Consolidated Agencies

Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Appeal Tribunal (Adjudicative Agency)

The Tribunal hears and decides issues relative to: the technical and cost apportionment of projects under the Drainage Act; disputes over the adjustment of loss under a crop insurance contract; exemptions for religious reasons from registration and/or paying the fee associated with joining an accredited farm organization; accreditation of farm organizations; disputes under the Farm Products Marketing Act; farmland classification for municipal taxation purposes; disputes under the Farm Implements Act; disputes under the Agricultural Employees Protection Act; and a number of other disputes under various statutes.

- Board of Negotiation (Adjudicative Agency)
  The function of the board is to negotiate settlements in cases where contaminants caused damage to livestock, crops, trees or other vegetation. While the jurisdiction for requesting a Board of Negotiation falls with the Minister of Environment in legislation, the funding for the operation of the board has been transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Legislation stipulates that the board of negotiation be established by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Boards Under the Farm Products Payments Act

Under the Farm Products Payments Act, funds and boards are established to: protect producers from non-payment by dealers; investigate claims; grant or refuse payment of claims; and determine the amounts and manner of payment. Boards administering funds under the Farm Products Payment Act are the Grain Financial Protection Board and Livestock Financial Protection Board. Both boards under this Act are "trust agencies."

- Grain Financial Protection Board (Trust Agency)
  The Board collects fees, administers compensation funds and approves claims made against the Funds. The Funds were set up under the Grain Financial Protection Program to protect producers of grain corn, soybeans, wheat and canola in the event of defaults on payment by licensed buyers.
- Livestock Financial Protection Board (Trust Agency)
  The board collects fees, administers a compensation fund and approves claims made against the fund. The fund was set up under the Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program to protect producers and other sellers of beef cattle in the event of defaults on payment by licensed buyers.

Business Risk Management Review Committee (Advisory Agency)

This committee replaced the Ontario AgriStability Review Committee (OARC). The Business Risk Management (BRM) programs, delivered by Ontario's program administrator, were established to provide producers with effective tools to manage business risks. A program participant may submit a review request in the case of disagreement with how BRM program rules were applied to the participant's application by the program administrator. The Business Risk Management Review Committee (BRMRC) is responsible for hearing review requests of program administrator decisions in relation to program applications and making non-binding recommendations to the delivery agent. The BRMRC has the authority to consider requests for reviews under: (a) AgriStability; (b) Ontario's Risk Management Program; (c) Ontario's Self-Directed Risk Management Program; (d) any other BRM program that the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Minister assigns responsibility to the BRMRC for considering requests for reviews of a program administrator's decision.

Livestock Medicines Advisory Committee (Advisory Agency)

The board has the following duties: (1) to review all legislation and regulations pertaining to livestock medicines; (2) to inquire into and report back to the minister on any matter referred to it by the minister; (3) to advise the minister on matters relating to the control and regulation of livestock medicines; (4) to evaluate and recommend procedures relating to the sale of livestock medicines; (5) to evaluate and recommend procedures relating to the sale of livestock medicines and the proper standards for their maintenance, handling and storage; (6) to make recommendations respecting the description of drugs or classes of drugs as livestock medicines for sale under a licence or any class of licence. Six hundred outlets are regulated.

Normal Farm Practices Protection Board (Adjudicative Agency)

The board exercises such powers and performs such duties as are conferred or imposed upon it by or under the act, including the power to (1) inquire into and resolve a dispute respecting an agricultural operation, including the determination of what constitutes a normal farm practice; and (2) make the necessary inquiries and orders to ensure compliance with its decisions.

Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (Regulatory Agency)

The commission supervises Ontario's twenty-four marketing boards and designated associations, develops and implements regulated marketing policy, provides leadership in the form of advice, facilitation, and direction to Ontario's marketing boards and designated associations, provides educational programs to boards and designated associations and industry stakeholders in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the regulated marketing system.

Ontario Food Terminal Board (Operational Enterprise)

The board's mandate is to acquire, construct, equip and operate a wholesale fruit and produce market, and operate such facility for the transportation, distribution, and handling of fruit and produce.

Rural Economic Development Advisory Panel (Advisory Agency)

The REDAP is responsible for providing non-binding advice, in the form of recommendations, to the Minister on applications for funding under: (a) the Rural Economic Development Program (REDP); (b) Programs under the REDP; or (c) any other program that the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Minister assigns to the REDAP.

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1.5 DETAILED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD
AND
MINISTRY OF RURAL AFFAIRS
Operating and Capital Summary by Vote

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs work to advance the government's interest in a competitive and productive agri-food and agri-product sector to support economic growth in rural and urban communities and a high quality of life for all Ontario residents.

Votes/Programs	Estimates 2013-14 $	Change from Estimates 2012-13 $	%	Estimates 2012-13 * $	Interim Actuals 2012-13 * $	Actuals 2011-12 * $
OPERATING AND CAPITAL EXPENSE						
Vote 1: Ministry Administration Program	23,852,600	(227,200)	(0.9)	24,079,800	23,936,800	23,217,759
Vote 7: Better Public Health and Environment	85,569,600	(43,100)	(0.1)	85,612,700	85,666,800	85,613,699
Vote 8: Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities	676,990,100	(67,187,700)	(9.0)	744,177,800	713,562,200	1,027,293,528
Vote 9: Policy Development	16,949,500	50,700	0.3	16,898,800	15,642,900	15,660,731
Total Operating and Capital Expense to be Voted	**803,361,800**	**(67,407,300)**	**(7.7)**	**870,769,100**	**838,808,700**	**1,151,785,717**
Statutory Appropriations	2,097,014	1,534,000	272.5	563,014	2,348,100	2,400,910
Ministry Total Operating and Capital Expense	**805,458,814**	**(65,873,300)**	**(7.6)**	**871,332,114**	**841,156,800**	**1,154,186,627**
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricorp	235,820,400	(28,374,600)	(10.7)	264,195,000	219,659,300	124,736,281
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO)	(9,618,500)	3,060,800	(24.1)	(12,679,300)	(13,284,800)	(4,594,151)
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Ontario Racing Commission	9,800,700	(1,194,000)	(10.9)	10,994,700	9,800,700	10,610,028
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments	**1,041,461,414**	**(92,381,100)**	**(8.1)**	**1,133,842,514**	**1,057,332,000**	**1,284,938,785**
OPERATING AND CAPITAL ASSETS						
Vote 1: Ministry Administration Program	300,000	(1,297,900)	(81.2)	1,597,900	N/A	-
Vote 7: Better Public Health and Environment	500,000	-	-	500,000	N/A	29,800
Vote 8: Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities	305,000	(4,994,000)	(94.2)	5,299,000	N/A	201,039
Total Operating and Capital Assets to be Voted	**1,105,000**	**(6,291,900)**	**(85.1)**	**7,396,900**	**N/A**	**230,839**
Statutory Appropriations	11,800,000	(1,000)	(0.0)	11,801,000	N/A	5,470,500
Ministry Total Operating and Capital Assets	**12,905,000**	**(6,292,900)**	**(32.8)**	**19,197,900**	**N/A**	**5,701,339**

* Estimates for the previous fiscal year are re-stated to reflect any changes in ministry organization and/or program structure. Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2013 Ontario Budget.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD
AND
MINISTRY OF RURAL AFFAIRS
Reconciliation to Previously Published Data

Operating and Capital Expense	Estimates 2012-13	Actual 2011-12
	$	$
Total Operating and Capital Expense Previously Published *	873,370,314	1,156,224,827
Government Reorganization:		
Transfer of Functions from other Ministries	-	-
Transfer of Functions to other Ministries	(2,038,200)	(2,038,200)
Restated Total Operating and Capital Expense	**871,332,114**	**1,154,186,627**

*Total Operating and Capital includes voted Operating and Capital, Statutory Appropriations and Special Warrants. Excludes Consolidation and Other Adjustments. The 2011-12 Actuals are adjusted to reflect new Ministry structure(s) in 2012-13.

APPENDIX I

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13

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MINISTRY ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS 2012-2013

In 2012-2013, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs (formerly OMAFRA) worked to achieve its vision of a successful and sustainable agri-food and agri-product businesses.

The ministry's key activities fell under three strategic priorities:

1. Increasing the competitiveness and productivity of Ontario's agri-food and agri-product sectors;
2. Increasing the consumption of local food in Ontario; and
3. Bringing an Open for Business approach to legislative and regulatory reform, while ensuring the public interest in health and the environment.

In early 2013, the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs began the transition to one organization that serves two ministers – the Minister of Agriculture and Food, and the Minister of Rural Affairs. Staff supported the transition to two new ministers and supported the development of new organizational structures.

Increasing the Competitiveness and Productivity of Ontario's Agri-Food and Agri-Product Businesses

From April 2012 to March 2013, OMAFRA's programs and services led to over $503 million invested in the food processing sector -- and created and retained 2,417 jobs.

In 2012, food exports reached record highs at $10.8 billion. Ontario is among the country's leading export provinces. While the United States remains Ontario's largest single buyer of food exports, the province is helping exporters diversify their markets. In January 2013, the province led an export mission to China and hosted various incoming buyer missions.

The research partnership between OMAFRA and the University of Guelph yielded successful results. Recent research has led to eight patent applications and 32 licencing applications directly related to commercializing research that will benefit the agriculture and food sector. The ministry's investment in 2012-2013 allowed the university to attract a further $21.4 million in private sector investment.

In 2012, for the sixth year in a row, agricultural innovations from across Ontario were celebrated and promoted under the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence. These annual awards recognize innovative business ideas and practices from across the agri-food sector.

In conjunction with farmers, OMAFRA also successfully re-designed the provincial Risk Management Program (RMP). The redesigned Risk Management Program is fiscally responsible and predictable for both government and producers. It includes a number of innovative features, including an industry-managed premium fund that shares the risk and helps industry better meet its business risk management needs.

In 2012, the ministry worked with livestock producers to develop and fund the Ontario Corn Fed Beef risk management fund. This industry-led risk management tool supports market-driven solutions and promotes local food opportunities.

In 2012, funding to 20 innovative value chain and sector information-sharing projects were approved under the first intake of the Traceability Foundations Initiative. The second intake of TFI opened in June 2012; 15 projects have been approved in this intake. These information-sharing projects will help secure markets and build traceability in Ontario's agri-food industry.

As of March, 2013, OMAFRA's traceability efforts resulted in 36,239 premises being validated and registered in the Provincial Premises Registry. This represents a 57 per cent increase from the previous baseline of 23,000 premises.

The Ontario Foodborne Illness Outbreak Response Protocol (ON-FIORP) was developed and implemented to guide the investigation and management of foodborne illness within the province. The ON-FIORP, in combination with companion national-level protocol, provides the foundation for enhanced collaboration among food safety and public health government partners, which will improve public health outcomes such as quicker resolution of outbreak-related investigations.

Since 2009, OMAFRA has delivered provincial funding for several infrastructure programs, including the Building Canada Fund – Communities Component and Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. This resulted in many new and/or redeveloped roads, bridges, water and sewage treatment plants, community centres and airports across the province.

Intake 2 of the Ontario Vineyard Improvement Program – Producer Support Component closed in March 2012. One hundred and sixteen applications were approved.

In April 2012, regulations governing the Grain Financial Protection Program were modernized to reflect current industry practices. The changes came into effect in July 2012.

In addition, to help livestock farmers affected by dry weather conditions, the ministry supported the producer-led Hay East initiative. The government's assistance helped transport donated hay from western Canada to Ontario farmers in need.

To help tree fruit growers whose crops experienced damage due to an early frost, the ministry partnered with the federal government to deliver financial support. The funding was aimed at helping growers develop strategies to prevent or mitigate frost damage. This is in addition to support through Business Risk Management programs, including Production Insurance, AgriStability and Ontario's Self-Directed Risk Management program.

In November 2012, the ministry took action to streamline the accreditation process for general farm organizations by introducing a temporary amendment to a regulation under the Farm Registration and Farm Organizations Funding Act, 1993. The amendment simplifies the eligibility requirements that farm organizations have to meet in order to be accredited.

Growing Forward

In 2012, the ministry successfully negotiated, with the federal government, the new agricultural policy framework – Growing Forward 2. Together, the governments of Canada and Ontario developed strategic initiatives that will help industry to grow profits, expand markets and manage risks. Growing Forward 2 builds on the successes of Growing Forward.

In 2012-2013, many successful initiatives under the Growing Forward framework continued.

Between April 1, 2011 and January 14, 2013, Ontario farmers voluntarily completed 2,917 on-farm environmental improvement projects, through Growing Forward's Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program.

From April 2011 to January 2013, 850 businesses participated in the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan education workshops, with 760 EFP Action Plans reviewed and deemed appropriate.

In July 2012, a focused cost-share opportunity for Enhancing Environmental Performance of commercial greenhouses, landscape nurseries and vegetable farmers was launched through the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan. To January 2013, 172 best management projects have been completed.

Since November 2011, the ministry's Growing Forward program has provided support to the Biogas Association to conduct an innovation forum to look at new opportunities and markets for renewable natural gas from agriculture and food industry by-products, which has resulted in several new initiatives being explore related to alternative fuels.

Through Growing Forward the ministry provided support to six Innovation Forums that brought together representatives of industry, academia and government to look at opportunities and challenges and recommend future collaborative actions.

Increasing the Consumption of Local Food in Ontario

In 2012, the government committed in introduce legislation that would celebrate, support and promote local food. On October 4, 2012, Minister McMeekin introduced the Promoting Local Food Act, 2012 in the legislature. The proposed legislation built on feedback from local food stakeholders through a series of roundtables held in summer 2012. Ontarians were also engaged through social media to solicit their input and ideas into how we could increase awareness of, access to, and sales of local food in Ontario.

The new Ontario government re-introduced this legislation in March 2013, to help make more local food available in markets, schools, cafeterias, grocery stores, and restaurants throughout the province.

Bringing an Open For Business Approach to Legislative and Regulatory Reform While Ensuring the Public Interest in Health and the Environment

In 2012-2013, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs worked with other ministries, other levels of government and stakeholders to promote Open for Business legislation and the corresponding regulatory framework.

Through the Agri-Food Sector Consultation Forum process, the ministry continued to find more ways to clear the path for business success. Through this forum, industry leaders identified regulatory burdens, often in other ministries, and worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Rural Affairs and other ministries to find resolution. Three forum meetings were held over the past year with industry and government.

The ministry was one of three ministries who participated in a pilot of the new Regulatory Impact Analysis tool before the process is implemented across all ministries.

Ministry staff developed and continues to work on implementing the items under its regulatory modernization package to further streamline the ministry's legislations and regulations and to contribute to sector's competitiveness.

Producers, processors and agri-food business will have easier access to needed information through a single phone number, as part of its One Window initiative.

Assistance to investors will be coordinated so that they can establish and expand operations faster.

Ontario

Rural Development

Since November 2011, OMAFRA has provided support to approximately 160 municipalities to maintain and improve drainage in rural Ontario. OMAFRA also provided support to 180 farmers to make agricultural lands more productive through the installation of tile drainage.

The Rural Summer Jobs Service approved more than 1,200 rural employers for 2012 and helped create more than 5,000 summer jobs for Ontario students.

To support economic development in rural Ontario the province invested in the rural infrastructure that businesses need, from roads to water treatment and broadband connectivity.

Ministry Interim Actual Expenditures 2012-13

Operating	867
Capital	190
Staff Strength ** (as of March 31, 2013)	885.12

* Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2013 Ontario Budget.

** Ontario Public Service Full-Time Equivalent positions.